Post Offices in Gujarat

*78 SHRI BRAHMAKUMAR BHATT: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS be pleased to state;

(a) the number of new post offices sanctioned and set up in the rural areas of Gujarat during 2000-2001, district wise;

(b) the time-bound programme in this regard; and

(c) the places where no post offices have been set up so far and whether they fulfil the prescribed criteria for setting up of new post offices?

THE MINISTER OF COMMUNICATIONS (SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN): (a) to (c) 9 post offices were opened during the year 2000-2001. The district-wise distribution of the same is given in the Statement (See below). It is also stated that so far there are two proposals pending for opening of post offices which are justified according to the prescribed criteria. One of them is at Tantithaia in Surat district and the other is at Sambal-Pani in Banaskantha district.

Statement

District-wise Details of New Post Offices Sanctioned and Set up in the Rural Areas of Gujarat During 2000-2001

Name of District	No. of New Post office(s) sanctioned and set up
Banaskantha	1
Gandhinagar	1
Sabarkantha	2
Dahod	1
Panchmahal	1
Valsad	1
Narmada	1
Surat	1
TOTAL	9

Impact of Terrorist Attacks on Tourism Sector

*79. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE:
SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY:

Will the Minister of TOURISM AND CULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that the flow of tourism has sahrply declined in the recent months following September 11, terrorists attack in the United States;

(b) if so, the details there of and the loss in foreign exchange earnings;

(c) whether Government have prepared/proposed to prepare a contingency plan for the revival of tourism in the country in the coming months; and

(d) if so, the details thereof and if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF TOURISM AND CULTURE (SHRI JAGMOHAN):

(a) and (b) there has been a decline of about 20 per cent in the foreign tourist arrivals and 16 per cent in the foreign exchange earnings through tourism in the two months of September and October, 2001 as compared to the same period of the year 2000.

(c) and (d) Yes Sir, Government has constituted a Special Task Force for dealing with problems arising after terrorist attacks in the USA. The Special Task Force consisting of representatives of concerned Government Departments, tourism industry and tourism consultants have delebrated on various issues and problems. Important decisions taken by the Task Force include the following:

(1) To send appropriate signals to countries all over the world that situation in India is absolutely normal and that there should be no fears about the safety and security of the tourists.

(2) To reorient marketing efforts by focussing on markets in South East Asia, North Asia and Australasia while emphasising the signifance of domestic tourism.

(3) To encourage launching of special packages by hotels and travel agents/ tour operators with discounted rates. (As a matter of fact, industry has announced various incentive packages already)

(4) Organising Road Shows to dispel perceptions of insecurity in markets of South East Asia and also organising Road Shows in U.K., France, Germany and Austria before and after World Travel Mart.

(5) To approach, on behalf of travel and tourism trade, other Government of India Ministeries/Departments/Organisations from time to time for considerations of various issues/demands raised by the trade after their due examination.

(6) To formulate strategy for marketing in other short haul distination.

(7) To use Internet as an efficient and cost effective media for promoting tourism to India in the current context.

(8) To arrange special farm tours for foreign media and trade to get a first hand idea of prevalent safety and security in the country.

(9) Not to cancel planned events to avoid panic. Strengthen participation.

(10) To try and tap Chinese outbound market.

(11) Goverment of India Tourist Offices (GOITOs) abroad to concentrate on foreign travel press to create confidence in the international trade and to conserve resources.

Rent Revision for the Residence of Indian High Commissioner in UK

*80. SHRI DIPANKAR MUKHERJEE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the rent of residence of Indian High Commissioner in UK was revised by renewing the lease for 65 years effective from 1990;

(b) if so, the financial involvement of Government of India in the renewal;

(c) whether similar exercise has been done for revising the rent of 2, Rajaji Marg, New Delhi, which is leased to the British High Commissioner; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI JASWANT SINGH): (a) and (b) yes, Sir. The lease of the property at KPG London, the residence of the High Commissioner of India in UK, was renewed with effect from April, 1990, for a period of 65 years. The terms and conditions for the renewal of lease include a premium of Pound Sterling 14 million and a ground rental of Pound Sterling 10,000 per annum. The ground rental to be increased to Pound Sterling 20,000 per annum in the 22nd year of the lease and Pound Sterling 40,000 per annum in the 42nd year of the lease.

(c) and (d) The matter of revising the rental of 2, Rajaji Marg, New Delhi, which is leased to the British High Commission in New Delhi is under consideration. It may be mentioned that the proposal for renewal of the lease of No.2 Rajaji Marg has already been forwarded to the British High Commission.